Subject: Emberfest 2026 | Regional Advisory | DTU update | New members | Quarterly Meeting
From: 4WD NSW and ACT Inc <office@4wdnow.com.au>
Date: 19/01/2026 11:00 AM
To: <delegate.tam4wdclub@gmail.com>

Presidents Report

Welcome to 2026. I hope everyone had a fulfilling Christmas and New Year.
Sadly, 2025 ended on a horrendous note, and our thoughts are with the victims and their families of the Bondi tragedy. The events of December 14, 2025, will have far-reaching effects for many years.

The Inquiry into Access Restrictions to Public Land began on December 9th at Parliament House, Sydney. I joined Craig, representing 4wd NSW & ACT, along with Dom Fitzgibbon and Darren Callia, representing the Triple Diamond 4wd club, and Tony Crooke, who started the process and is the founder of The Outsider Podcast. This was my first time at this type of inquiry, and I found it very interesting to be part of the process. With the terrific support from my counterparts, I felt we presented a clear, factual account of the current land management practices employed by National Parks and the disconnect with recreational user groups. Speaking with other association representatives at the inquiry, we all share similar frustrations with the lack of productive consultation and with pandering to well-financed, noisy minorities. The inquiry will run for several weeks, and we have been asked to complete supplementary questions and submit them by the 19th of January. We will keep members updated on the proceedings as they are published.

As clubs return to meetings in 2026, please ensure you have the conversation about the fee adjustment our effervescent Treasurer proposed at previous quarterly meetings. Our fees have been stable for the past 5 years. Tony and Maggie diligently work to minimise our financial footprint, but we are not immune to today's rising costs. To maintain our association's ability to support clubs' activities and advocate for our recreation, the small increase in the annual membership fee is

justified, and I encourage all clubs to support the proposal.

The February Quarterly meeting is at Goulburn RSL starting at 10 am. I look forward to catching up on all the news from our clubs.

Cheers
Lee Dunstan
President

🔥 EMBERFEST – MAY 15,16 & 17, 2026 🔥
Winter in Australia has never looked so good!

Join us for a fun-filled weekend packed with food, games, and great company.

Friday Night (15 May)
• Games Night – kick off the weekend with fun and laughter

Saturday (16 May)
• Day trips
• Local markets
• Camp Oven Cook-Off
• 5:00pm – Nibbles
• Trivia Night with great prizes up for grabs

Sunday Morning (17th)
• Members Meeting
• Tea & coffee provided
• Lucky door prize
• Breakfast & lunch included

Don’t miss this warm and wonderful winter celebration. More details coming soon – save the date!
Tickets available in the new year.
Mudgee Showground, Mudgee NSW

The name Camp Oven Cook Off has been retired.
The cook off is such a small part of the weekend that COCO didn't fit the event. I hope you like the change.

Maggie Thomas

I write to advise you, as a valued stakeholder, that the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) is seeking applications for appointment to the eight NPWS regional advisory committees for a four-year term, commencing 1 July 2026. The eight regional advisory committees are:

1. Blue Mountains
2. Greater Sydney
3. Hunter Central Coast
4. North Coast
5. Northern Inland
6. South Coast
7. Southern Ranges
8. West

As you know, committee members provide valuable insight into the management of the national parks and reserves within their regions and are an important conduit between the community and NPWS. We encourage applicants with strong connections to the national parks and reserves in their region.

Under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 the function of a regional advisory committee includes providing advice to the Minister for the Environment on draft plans of management and to the Department Secretary and the National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council on policies, plans and activities within the respective NPWS regions.

Applications are invited from people with experience and expertise in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural heritage, local government, community involvement in conservation, rural or regional issues, ecotourism or sustainable visitor use, environmental education and those with scientific qualifications in conservation biology, wildlife management or related disciplines.

Meetings are held at least four times a year. Committee members are eligible to receive sitting fees of $220 per full day ($110 per half day), in line with Classification and Remuneration Framework for NSW Government Boards and Committees. Reasonable approved travel expenses are reimbursed.

Applications open on 19 January 2026 and can be made via www.environment.nsw.gov.au/regional-advisory-committees. Applications close at 11:59pm on Monday 16 February 2026.

For more information on regional advisory committees or to register an interest for recruitment updates, visit www.environment.nsw.gov.au/regional-advisory-committees or contact Stuart McMahon at rac@environment.nsw.gov.au or 02 6229 7033.

regards Michael Vader

Executive Director,
Business Delivery

Download the fact sheet HERE

Driver Training Unit (DTU) Update.

In 2026 the DTU will shift to focus more on assessment only.

Since 2021 DTU has been running workshops for the Driver Awareness Facilitators (DAF's) with the aim to build skills and knowledge within the clubs.

For 2026 the intention is the DAF's will educate and Facilitate Awareness for members within their clubs, to prepare them before they attend the DTU assessments.
DAF's will need to verify their members have the skills and knowledge to complete the assessment, This will allow the DTU to assess more members.

For clubs that do not have a DAF we will try to link those clubs with clubs who have a driver awareness program and are willing to accept members of other clubs on their driver awareness events.

The DTU has scheduled two basic assessment days, and one non accredited complex weekend & two DAF workshops.
March 28th - Basic assessment - Wallaroo SF
May 9th - Basic assessment - Wallaroo SF
July 4th - DAF Workshop – Location TBA
Sept 27th /28th Non Accredited Complex Weekend remembering that Members must have completed a Basic well before the Complex - Wallaroo SF
October 24th – DAF workshop – Location TBA

We also have some clubs that want to do an Assessment only club week end, this will be discussed with Each club separately and will be dependent on available assessors.

Please Note:
These dates are not courses for booking in yet. They are not listed on the website. The links will come when Getabout sets them up in their website. This is an update only and the links will come shortly. Keep an eye on the newsletter for notice.

Quarterly Meeting Saturday Feb 21 2026

10am - 2pm Goulburn Soldiers Club 15-17 Market Street, Goulburn NSW.
Please note that this club will not allow entry until 10am. Please wait at the main entrance until that time.
The Committee has been given access prior to be able to set up but they wont allow others to enter early.
We have a new club to vote on at this meeting
Defenders Club of Australia Inc, with 345 members, so come along and meet the new guys.

Light lunch provided
November Minutes HERE
Agenda

This is a voting meeting,
* new clubs
* fees (please see Treasurers Report below)

Treasurer's Report – Fee Structure for FY 2026/27

Motion: Proposed Fee change to take effect from FY 2026/27 (fees due 01/07/2026) overall increase to $19 per member capped at 120, plus Insurance Component (all members) to $5.00

Reasoning: I am occasionally asked at quarterly meetings just how 'financial' we are as an organisation. Currently we have quite sufficient funds to operate (barring unforeseen circumstances) for many years. However, like every person or entity in these times, we are seeing increasing costs. We cut where we can, and manage funds quite well, but there is a case to review the fees we charge.

For the 2026/27 year a revised fee structure will come into effect, that 'caps' (at 120) the number of members used to calculate the Affiliation Fee. That is, there is no cap for the Insurance Component, as that cost is influenced by the insurance

premium itself. The impact of this change will see a reduction in revenue (based on this year's number of 3,199) of almost $6,250, calculated as: 353 (number of members from 7 clubs that are above the 120 member threshold) X $17.70 (the Affiliation Fee $15.70 plus $2.00 Marketing Levy)

Our Insurance component is also under pressure, with the current $4.30 now not covering the annual premium. We collected: 3,199 x $4.30 = $13,755.70 Actual premium cost for 2025/26: $15,568.98 (or $4.86 per member). This is a shortfall of over $1,800 absorbed by the Association. Note we are expecting an increase in P/L insurance, as this is trending up in the industry. In total we collected $70,378 for 2024/25 affiliations. In the 'new' scenario, that would look like $64,130. Here is also something to consider – that we took unprecedented action during Covid (only charging half fees one year) to support our Clubs; also that we refunded the National Fee when we first departed from National in 2019/20. In fact, we've managed to keep fees very consistent for the last five years, when most costs have risen significantly. Something we are also aware of is that many clubs have increased fees over the past few years, some as much as $10 in one jump. Let's have a look at the historical data (as far back as I could go):

Fin Year	State Fee	Total Cost per Member	Notes
2014/15	$15.70	$ 19.00	Includes $3.30 to National, insurance paid separately by club direct to TCIS under Nat arrangement (was almost $6 per member)
2015/16	$15.70	$ 19.00	Includes $3.30 to National, insurance paid separately by club direct to TCIS under Nat arrangement (was almost $6 per member)
2016/17	$15.70	$ 19.00	Includes $3.30 to National, insurance paid separately by club direct to TCIS under Nat arrangement (was almost $6 per member)
2017/18	$15.70	$ 23.70	Includes $3.30 to National, and $4.70 insurance changed to cheaper better policy under state control
2018/19	$15.70	$ 23.70	Includes $3.30 to National, and $4.70 insurance changed to cheaper better policy under state control
2019/20	$15.70	$ 20.40	* Clubs paid $23.70, but we refunded the Nat Fee when we left National Assoc due to dispute
2020/21	$15.70	$ 11.85	Half fee ($7.85) to assist clubs through COVID; plus Ins $4.00 and rejoined National for reduced fee $2.00
2021/22	$15.70	$ 21.70	plus $4.00 ins and $2.00 National
2022/23	$15.70	$ 21.70	plus $4.00 ins and $2.00 National
2023/24	$15.70	$ 22.00	plus $4.30 ins and $2.00 National
2024/25	$15.70	$ 22.00	Plus $4.30 Ins. We voted to leave National Assn at AGM Nov 2023 - delegates voted we retain the $2.00 for marketing use.
2025/26	$15.70	$ 22.00	Plus $4.30 Ins. We voted to leave National Assn at AGM Nov 2023 - delegates voted we retain the $2.00 for marketing use.

The point I am heading to here is proposing a simplification and increase in fees for 2026/27 as follows:

Affiliation Fee: $19.00 Insurance Component: $5.00 Total per Member: $24.00

Affiliation Fee: This would be an increase of $2.00 per member (less than 10%) of the current fee structure. It would also abolish the Marketing Levy, which is paid into and sourced from our general funds anyway. Examples of this are things like brochures, banners, and sponsoring events like the 'AirUp' day.

Insurance Component: The 'rounding up' to $5.00 would largely close the current gap. Any reasonable shortfall would be covered as per current practice. I propose these changes be approved by the Delegates at no later than the February Quarterly meeting. It is therefore imperative that you communicate with your Club committees, and ensure they read the invoices carefully to make the correct payments.

Thank you
Tony Ellery Treasurer 15 November 2025

Four Wheel Drive NSW & ACT INC | Office Function tender for period from 1 July 2026.
Review, Compliance and Governance Panel (RCGP) | rcgp@4wdnow.com

The Review, Compliance and Governance Panel (RCGP) was created in May 2021 to oversight the third-party provided Office Function of the association. The panel is a sub-committee and reports to the Association Committee and updates members at Quarterly meetings and via newsletters. The panel has three club delegates and two Association Committee members with the Chair being one of the delegates.

The panel can be contacted via the email address rcgp@4wdnow.com
Please contact the panel if you have any questions, comments, suggestions, complaints, compliments or can offer any assistance.

The Office Function will have been performed by Clever for over 5 years when the current contract expires on 30 June 2026. The Association committee and RCGP will tender the Office Function for the period from 1 July 2026.

Expressions of Interest
The RCGP is inviting organisations and people from within our membership to tender for the office function. It is important to note that the Association will only offer the tender to organisations and people that can perform this role as a contractor – the Association will not be taking on an employee for this role.
If you are interested to tender for this contractor role, please download the attached 'Expression of Interest' form. This form has details including information and requirements for organisations and people that wish to receive the tender document. The panel will use the form to evaluate the responses and form a short list to issue the tender document. Please forward completed forms to RCGP via email by 7 February 2026.

Please contact the panel via email if you have any questions.
Download the EOI document HERE

JUST IN CASE YOU MISSED IT.....

Red Cross First Aid Course

I have had a few inquiries about another Sydney Course for members.

We need 20 participants to run the course.

If you or your club are interested please email office@4wdnow.com

Need a ZOOM meeting?

Do you need a zoom meeting for your club?
You are welcome to use the Association account.
Please email Maggie with date, start time and duration.
office@4wdnow.com

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This newsletter is written using information provided by relevant parties.
If I write something that mentions "me or I" and there is no signature
after it then it is a message from me.
If you would like something to be added on behalf of your club
please email office@4wdnow.com.
Anything can be included as long as it's club based and for the benefit of clubs.
The newsletter is monthly (about the first of each month) but we can do an
extra "special" if there is something that is important that we missed.
- Maggie Thomas.

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